(c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[English]

Multinational Project for Rural Coverage

2050. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether India's first IT multinational project involving an investment of $ 850 millions have decided for 100 per cent Rural Coverage of India both in Cellular telephones and Communication;

(b) if so, the rural areas which are proposed to be covered in India by the company;

(c) the time by which this is likely to be completed; and

(d) the States where the programme is likely to be undertaken during 1996-97?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) There is no such proposal with the Department of Telecommunications.

(b) to (d). Not applicable in view of (a) above.

[Translation]

Halt of Train at Ayodhya

2051. DR. RAMVILAS VEDANTI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Dera and Sealdah express trains which passes through Ayodhya halts there only for 2 minutes and due to which passengers are facing great difficulties and they miss their trains due to lackness of time;

(b) if so, whether the time of halt of said trains will be raised from 2 minutes to 5 minutes;

(c) if so, the time by which the time of halt of these trains is likely to be raised; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (d). 3152 Jammu Tawi-Sealdah Express stops for 2 minutes, 3151 for 5 minutes, 3009/3010 Doon Express for 4 minutes. Increase in duration of halt of 3152 Express to 5 minutes is neither feasible due to operation constraints nor justified.

[English]

Daitari-Banspani Project

2052. SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the estimated cost of on-going Daitari-Banspani Project;

(b) the amount actually spent on this project upto October, 1996;

(c) whether EXIM bank of Japan has shown interest in extending loan to Railways for the project;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the time by which loan is likely to be received alongwith steps being taken by the Government in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) The present anticipated cost is Rs.402 crores excluding Electrification.

(b) Rs.67.90 crores (upto September, 1996)

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The Project report has been submitted to them for consideration.

(e) This will be known only after their response and terms and conditions have been received and considered by the Government.

Open Skies Policy

2053. SHRI PINAKI MISRA : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether most of the private air operators who entered the Indian skies under the "Open Skies Policy" have either disappeared from the scene or are grounded and facing prospects of closure;

(b) if so, whether the Government have since reviewed the operation of the policy and gone into the cause of failure, partial or total in respect of the different Air-operators;

(c) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(d) the steps being taken to secure a fair competition to the State-owned operators?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) Out of the seven scheduled private airlines holding permit to operate scheduled air transport services, two are not operating air services due to non-availability of operational aircraft.

(b) to (d). A proposal to review the policy on domestic air transport services is under consideration of the Government.

[Translation]

Telephone Services in Tribal Districts of M.P.

2054. SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULESTE : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have prepared/ proposed to prepare any scheme to connect Panchayats